

Remarks/Argument

In the Office Action, claims 8-9, 16-17, 23, 36, 45-46, 50, 54, and 56 were objected to, but it was stated that the claims would be allowable if amended appropriately. Claim 37 was object to because of certain informalities. Claims 1-7, 11-15, 19, 20, 25-34, 37, 39, 40 42-49, 51-53, 55, 57, and 58 were rejected. Claims 10, 18 and 24 were withdrawn from consideration.

Claims 1-2, 4, 10, 12-13, 15, 18, 20-22, 24, 31, 35, 37-44, and 51-52 have been cancelled and claims 3, 5, 8, 11, 14, 16, 19, 23, 25-26, 28-30, 32-33, 36, 45, 47, 49, and 53-58 have been amended. Claims 3, 5-9, 11, 14, 16-17, 19, 23, 25-30, 32-34, 36, 45-50, and 53-58 are currently pending in the instant Application.

I. Objection

Claim 37 was objected to because “the drive element” should be “a drive element.” Given that claim 37 has been cancelled, the objection is moot. Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully submitted.

II. § 102(b) Rejections

As mentioned above, claims 1-4, 11-15, 19-20, 25-34, 37, 39, 40, 42-44, 47-49, 51-53, 55, and 57-58 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b). It is respectfully submitted that the rejections are moot in view of the claim amendments herein. All pending claims now depend from allowable claims. Thus, withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

III. § 103(a) Rejections

Claims 5-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mutschler in view of U.S. Patent 5,758,650 to Miller et al. (“Miller”). It is respectfully requested that the rejections are moot in view of the claim amendments herein. Claims 5-7 now depend directly or indirectly from claim 8, which is allowable. Thus, withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

IV. Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 8-9, 16-17, 23, 36, 45-46, 50, 54 and 56 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but it was stated that the claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Amended claim 8 is allowable because it has been amended into independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Further, claims 3, 5, and 11 have been amended to depend from allowable claim 8. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that claims 3, 5-9, and 11 are now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections is respectfully requested.

Amended claim 16 is allowable because it has been amended into independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Further, claims 14 and 19 have been amended to depend from allowable claim 16. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that claims 14, 16-17, and 19 are now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections is respectfully requested.

Amended claim 23 is allowable because it has been amended into independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Further, claims 25, 26, and 28-30 have been amended to depend from allowable claim 23. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that claims 23 and 25-30 are now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections is respectfully requested.

Amended claim 36 is allowable because it has been amended into independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Further, claims 32-33 have been amended to depend from allowable claim 36. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that claims 32-34 and 36 are now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections is respectfully requested.

Amended claim 45 is allowable because it has been amended into independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Further, claims 47 and 49 have been amended to depend from allowable claim 45. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that claims 45-50 are now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections is respectfully requested.

Amended claim 54 is allowable because it has been amended into independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Further, claims 53 and 55-58 have been amended to depend from allowable claim 54. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that claims 53-58 are now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections is respectfully requested.

Please note that none of the amended claims above have been narrowed by these amendments, because all the limitations were present in the original base claim as filed.

Conclusion

Applicant has obviated the objections to claims 8-9, 16-17, 23, 36, 45-46, 50, 54, and 56 by amending the appropriate claims into independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, and amending the remaining claims to depend from the allowable independent claims.


Claims 1-2, 4, 10, 12-13, 15, 18, 20-22, 24, 31, 35, 37-44, and 51-52 have been cancelled and claims 3, 5, 8, 11, 14, 16, 19, 23, 25-26, 28-30, 32-33, 36, 45, 47, 49, and 53-58 have been amended. Consequently, claims 3, 5-9, 11, 14, 16-17, 19, 23, 25-30, 32-34, 36, 45-50, and 53-58 are allowable. Reconsideration and a Notice of Allowance for all pending claims is respectfully requested.

This response is being submitted on or before January 21, 2005 with a 1-month extension fee, making this a timely response. It is believed that no additional fees are due in connection with this filing. However, the Commission is authorized to charge any additional fees, including extension fees or other relief which may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 04-1420.

Respectfully submitted,

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